Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 - 8 are presently pending in the application. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended.

In item 4 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 1 - 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U. S. Patent No. 6,981,179 to Shigemasa et al ("**SHIGEMASA**") in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,990,607 to Sim et al ("**SIM**"). In item 5 of the Office Action, claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over **SHIGEMASA** in view of **SIM**, and further in view of U. S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0066056 to Suzuki et al ("**SUZUKI**").

Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejections, as applied to the amended claims.

The instant application discloses a system wherein an integrated module carries out a self-test of an integrated memory, without additional BIST hardware has to be provided for this purpose. The module 1 of Fig. 2 of the instant application, is shown as including a memory 2 and a micro controller 3, which, in a normal operation of the module 1,

Page 6 of 15

controls the memory access to the memory 2 and the external

data transfer of the module 1. Parts of the microcontroller 3

include a central processing unit 4 and an internal memory,

which can be utilized as a command memory 5 and/or as a defect

data memory 6.

As disclosed in the instant application, before the beginning

of a test operation, a command sequence for carrying out a

test sequence that is executed on the microcontroller is read

in from a test system 7 of Fig. 2 of the instant application.

As also disclosed in the instant application, the process of

loading the command sequence into a command memory 5 is

controlled by the CPU 4 of Fig. 2 of the instant application.

A test is executed by the CPU 4 from a start address of the

internal memory. Accordingly, test data are written to the

memory 2 by the CPU 4. The data are read out again from the

memory 2 under the control of the CPU 4 and corresponding

defect data are stored in the defect data memory 6 under the

control of the CPU 4. The defect data stored in the defect

data memory 6 are read out to outside the module 1, under the

control of the CPU 4, to the test system 7, in order to

evaluate the functional testing.

Additionally, the specification of the instant application

discloses that, on the basis of the defect data, it is

possible to construct a fail bit map for defect analysis

purposes of the memory 2 including memory cells for storing

data. Then, in order to repair defective memory cells, the

memory 2 of Fig. 2 of the instant application also contains

redundant memory cells which are combined to form redundant

row lines or redundant column lines. See, for example, page 2

of the instant application, lines 1 - 5.

As further disclosed in the instant application, during the

functional testing, the addresses of the tested memory cells

which have been detected as defective are stored in the defect

data memory 6 and are read-out under control of the

microcontroller, **to outside of the integrated module.** The

instant application and claims require, among other

limitations, that the addresses read-out to outside the

integrated module are evaluated by the test system to

calculate a repair solution. On the basis of the repair

solution calculated, regular lines having defective memory

cells are replaced by the redundant row lines or redundant

column lines of the memory 2. See, for example, page 2 of the

instant application, lines 1 - 5, which state:

> Integrated memories generally have **redundant memory**
> **cells** for repairing defective memory cells, **the**
> **redundant memory cells usually being combined to form**
> **redundant row lines or redundant column lines which**
> **can replace regular lines having defective memory**
> **cells** in address terms. [emphasis added by
> Applicants[

Page 8 of 15

See also, for example, page 2 of the instant application,

lines 15 - 23, which state:

> To that end, the addresses of the tested memory cells
> which have been detected as defective are stored in a
> defect address memory to form a so-called defect table
> in order to replace the memory cells by defect-free
> redundant memory cells in a subsequent step on the
> basis of the stored addresses. **On the basis of the
> defect table, the repair solution specific to each
> memory can subsequently be calculated and a so-called
> fail bit map can be produced.** [emphasis added by
> Applicants]

In view of the foregoing disclosure in the specification of

the instant application, Applicants have amended claim 1 to

recite, among other limitations:

> **a memory including memory cells <u>and redundant memory
> cells</u>** for storing code and data, **said redundant memory
> cells <u>being combined to form redundant row lines or
> redundant column lines</u>;**

> . . .

> a defect data memory for storing addresses of the
> memory cells of said memory which have been detected
> as defective, said addresses being generated during
> the functional testing, said addresses being stored in
> said defect data memory under control of said
> microcontroller, **said addresses further being read out
> under control of said microcontroller, to outside of
> the integrated module, <u>and used to calculate a repair
> solution to replace regular lines having defective
> memory cells with the redundant row lines or redundant
> column lines</u>.** [emphasis added by Applicants]

Similarly, Applicants have amended independent claim 5 to

recite, among other limitations:

Applic. No. 10/616,114
Response Dated October 31, 2007
Responsive to Office Action of September 19, 2007

A method for functionally checking a memory **including memory cells** _and redundant memory cells_ of an integrated module, which comprises the steps of:

. . .

using the read-out addresses of the defective memory cells to calculate a repair solution _that replaces regular lines having defective memory cells with redundant row lines or redundant column lines formed by redundant memory cells_. [emphasis added by Applicants]

As such, Applicants' amended claims require, among other limitations, a memory including memory cells **and** redundant memory cells, wherein defective memory cell addresses are read to **outside** the integrated module **in order to calculate** a repair solution that replaces regular lines having defective memory cells **with redundant row lines or redundant column lines formed by the redundant memory cells**. None of the cited prior art references, taken alone, or in combination, teach or suggest all limitations of Applicants' presently amended claims.

More particularly, the **SHIGEMASA** reference discloses a microcomputer having a built-in non-volatile memory, and a test system thereof. **SHIGEMASA** discloses transferring a test program from an external communication device to a built-in RAM (12 of Fig. 1 of **SHIGEMASA**), after which the control of a CPU is switched to the built-in RAM to conduct a test on the nonvolatile memory. See, for example, the Abstract of

SHIGEMASA. As such, SHIGEMASA clearly discloses **transferring a test program from an external device to the RAM of the microcomputer**. Thus, once the test program is completely transferred **to the built-in RAM of the microcomputer** of SHIGEMASA, the CPU 13 of Fig. 1 of SHIGEMASA, (which is also in the same microcomputer 11 of SHIGEMASA), under control of the test program in the local RAM, runs the test program on the non-volatile memory 11 of SHIGEMASA, and creates test result data including the test result. See, for example, col. 7 of SHIGEMASA, lines 30 - 39. SHIGEMASA discloses that the test on the non-volatile memory 11 is complete when a control computer (30 of Fig. 1 of SHIGEMASA) receives a pass/fail judgment from the microcomputer 10 of Fig. 1 of SHIGEMASA. See, for example, col. 7 of SHIGEMASA, lines 49 - 51.

As such, in contrast to the Applicants' presently claimed invention, the CPU 13 of the microcomputer 10 of the SHIGEMASA reference **does not read-out a set of address data of defective memory cells to an external test system to calculate a repair solution that replaces defective memory cells with redundant memory cells**. Rather, the cited SHIGEMASA reference discloses that the control computer 30 (i.e., an external device) either receives a pass/fail judgment from the microcomputer 10 or **makes a pass/fail judgment** based on the received memory test result data. See, for example, col. 7 of SHIGEMASA, lines 52

- 56. Rather, in **SHIGEMASA**, the memory test result data is read-out to an external device (the computer 30) **solely for the purpose of making a pass/fail judgment, and <u>not</u> to calculate a repair solution that replaces defective memory cells with redundant memory cells.** As such, among other limitations of Applicants' claims, the control computer 30 of **SHIGEMASA does not <u>calculate a repair solution to replace defective memory cells in the non-volatile memory 11 by redundant memory cells</u>,** as required by Applicants' claims.

The **SIM** reference, cited in the Office Action in connection with **SHIGEMASA**, also fails to teach or suggest, among other limitations of Applicants' claims, reading out defective memory cell addresses **to outside the integrated module <u>in order to calculate a repair solution that replaces regular lines having defective memory cells with redundant row lines or redundant column lines formed by the redundant memory cells</u>.** More particularly, the **SIM** reference discloses a system and method for adaptive storage and caching of a defect table. However, in contrast to Applicants' presently claimed invention, the defect table of **SIM** does not contain addresses of memory cells, i.e., addresses arranged between row lines and column lines of a memory. Rather, in **SIM**, the defect table contains information concerning the head, cylinder and sector of the defect location in the mass storage device,

which is formed as a disk drive. See, for example, col. 1,

line 64 – col. 2, line 3, which states:

> Where the mass storage device is a disc drive, during
> operation of disc drive, for every disc access, the
> target address is expressed as logical block address
> (LBA). **The LBA is converted to a physical address
> expressed as a physical cylinder/head/sector (PCHS)
> address** based on the physical layout of the drive and
> the information in the defect table. [emphasis added
> by Applicants]

As such, like **SHIGEMASA**, the **SIM** reference fails to teach or

suggest, among other limitations of Applicants' claims,

reading-out defective memory addresses to outside of the

integrated module to calculate a repair solution to replace

defective memory cells of a memory by redundant memory cells,

wherein the redundant memory cells are combined to form

redundant row lines or redundant column lines. Thus, in

Applicants' claimed invention, regular lines having defective

memory cells are replaced by **redundant row lines or redundant**

column lines based on a repair solution calculated from the

addresses of defective memory cells. Such limitation, among

others, is neither taught, nor suggested, in the **SIM**

reference.

The **SUZUKI** reference, cited in the Office Action in

combination with **SHIGEMASA** and **SIM** against Applicants'

dependent claim 7, does not cure the above-discussed

deficiencies of the **SHIGEMASA** and **SIM** references. As such,

Applic. No. 10/616,114
Response Dated October 31, 2007
Responsive to Office Action of September 19, 2007

Applicants' claims are believed to be patentable over

SHIGEMASA, SUZUKI and **SIM**, whether taken alone, or in

combination.

It is accordingly believed that none of the references,

whether taken alone or in any combination, teach or suggest

the features of claims 1 and 5. Claims 1 and 5 are,

therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The

dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because

they all are ultimately dependent on claims 1 or 5.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of

claims 1 - 8 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims

to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a

telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can

be worked out.

The instant response is being filed simultaneously with a

Request for Continuing Examination and its associated fee. If

an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for

extension is herewith made.

Applic. No. 10/616,114
Response Dated October 31, 2007
Responsive to Office Action of September 19, 2007

Please charge any additional fees that might be due with

respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of

Lerner Greenberg Stemer LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,
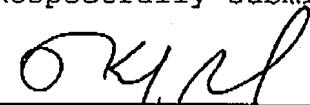
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Page 15 of 15